

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Wedge at 6:45 PM, and the following members were present:

Ms. Sylvia Wedge, Chair	Mr. Michael Buddemeyer	Mrs. Marge Levesque
Mr. Richard Carpender, V. Chair	Mrs. Terri Cortvriend, Clerk	Mr. Jamie Heaney

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Asst. Supt. Jermain, Ms. Christine Tague, Mrs. Patti Cofield, and Miss Julie MacDougall

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exceptions (a)(1) Job Performance/Personnel Matters, (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and/or Litigation; or (a)(8) Student Discipline. So voted 6-0.

Public Session recessed at 6:45 PM and resumed at 7:00 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Ms. Wedge announced that an Executive Session was held at 6:45 PM, and two votes were taken on personnel matters. The first motion passed 5-1. Mr. Heaney was opposed. The second motion passed 6-0.
2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi announced that graduation will be held Friday night for the Class of 2008. The reception begins at 5:00 PM in the Portsmouth High School Lobby, followed by the ceremony at 6:00 PM. The School Committee is invited to walk in the procession down to the field with the graduates and other members of the faculty and staff, and Mrs. Marge Wilkey will participate in honor of our lost member, Douglas Wilkey.

Dr. Lusi announced that it has been a very busy week for schools. The Senior Awards ceremony was held last night, and the Senior Prom is being held tomorrow night. We have an Executive Session reserved for Thursday evening at 6:00 PM, if necessary. We also had our June Job Fair last week. We've been working on scheduling so that teachers have their schedules and assignments before the year ends. We've also been working on professional development and curriculum.

Dr. Lusi announced that the Senior Project presentations went very well. She thanked everyone who helped as judges and in other ways. She stated that the Governor attended the presentation; however, he asked that there be no publicity. Dr. Lusi stated that we were excited to have him and honored that he took the time to attend, especially during this busy time of year.

- a) **Teaching and Learning:** Assistant Superintendent Jermain stated that she attended the Aquidneck World Affairs Essay Contest Symposium last week, at which two Portsmouth High School students received awards. They were Robert Lemure, who wrote an essay

called, "Consolidate, Clean, and Conserve," and Tatiana Henderson, who wrote an essay entitled, "Poverty - Rural vs. Urban."

- b) Finance and Operations: Ms. Tague stated that her department has been extremely busy trying to close out the fiscal year. There are some line item issues, however, she believes we will have sufficient variances to offset.
- c) High School Liaison: Graduation on Friday, Senior Project is all done. Prom tomorrow night. The new president of the Student Council is Amy Larson.

### 3. SPOTLIGHT

- a) **EBEC Teacher of the Year.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee commends Mr. Richard Price, Portsmouth Middle School Music Teacher, for being selected as an East Bay Teacher of the Year by East Bay Newspapers." This item was removed from agenda and will be presented at a future meeting.
- b) **2008 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mr. Heaney to commend Miss Julie MacDougall for receiving the 2008 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship. So voted 6-0. Ms. MacDougall explained that the top 5 percent of the senior class could apply for the scholarship. She announced that Elizabeth Futoma and Patrick Lambert also received scholarships.
- c) **PHS School Committee Liaison.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mr. Heaney to commend Miss Julie MacDougall for being the Portsmouth High School Liaison to the School Committee for the 2007-08 school year. So voted 6-0.

### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the minutes of the meetings held April 8, 2008, and April 22, 2008. So voted 6-0.

### 5. CONSENT AGENDA

- a) **Request for Leave of Absence.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee approves the request for Family and Medical Leave in accordance with the backup information."
- b) **Appt. – House Leaders, PMS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee approves the House Leader reappointments and the Math Coach/Coordinator appointment at Portsmouth Middle School for the 2008-09 school year as presented."

- c) **Appt. – Department Heads, PHS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee approves the Department Head appointments at Portsmouth High School for the 2008-09 school year as presented.”
- d) **Appt. – Elementary Student Services Coordinator.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent’s appointment, Recommendation #1-6/10/08, to the position of Elementary Student Services Coordinator, effective July 1, 2008.”
- f) **Approval of Requests for Permission to Home School.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee approves the requests to provide home schooling for the 2007-08 school year for student HS#20-5/08, as listed in the confidential memo dated May 14, 2008, in accordance with the provisions of R.I. Law 16-19-2.”

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. So voted 6-0. Dr. Lusi announced the following appointments:

b) Portsmouth Middle School:

Grade 6 House Leader – Lisa Mello  
Grade 7 House Leader – Christine Homen  
Grade 8 House Leader – Lisa Freeman  
Math Coach/Coordinator – Kristen Borges

c) Portsmouth High School:

Applied Arts & Sciences	Diane Creese
English	Camille Frankel
Fine Arts	Meryl Moore
Mathematics	Patricia McCarthy
Modern World Languages	Suzette Almeida-Louro
Physical Education/Health	Michael Medeiros
Science	Jeffrey Schoonover
Social Studies	James Betres
Special Education	J. Peter Dugan
Library/Media Services	Sarah Hunicke

d) Elementary Student Services Coordinator – Lisa Moy.

6. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- a) **Rescission of Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to rescind the teacher non-renewals as presented. So voted

6-0. Dr. Lusi reviewed the number of teachers we were able to bring back to positions to date. She stated that we are trying to recall as many as possible before the end of the year so that we can save in unemployment benefits. She added, however, that we can't take the risk of recalling a teacher if we don't have a job for them. The July Job Fair is scheduled for July 17<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Larry Fitzmorris asked if the School Department has sufficient funds on hand to pay salary and benefits if there is a 5 percent reduction. Dr. Lusi stated that if we have a 5 percent reduction, we will have to re-look at everything. She stated that by contract, and in order to have teaching and learning, we need to have teachers in front of the students; and our enrollment numbers justify bringing those teachers back.

- b) **Report on Graduation Rates.** Assistant Superintendent Jermain reported on the new graduation rates. She explained that the graduation rates are calculated differently than they have been in the past, based on a 4-year cohort. Our 2007 graduation rate drops from 92.8% using the old method of calculation, to 88.2% using the new method. She explained that by using SASID numbers, we can now track where students are. The State will be able to look at how many children come into Grade 9 and then how many of those children graduate, taking out those students who have left the district or new students who have come in. Mrs. Jermain stated that GED completers are not part of the graduation rate, and students who are retained are also taken out. Dr. Lusi stated that students who left our system and did not notify us as to where they were going used to be marked as "unknowns," however, under the new system, if we cannot ascertain where these students have gone, they are counted as dropouts. Mrs. Jermain stated that the State will start publishing and tracking 5- and 6-year graduation rates from now on, and it will determine for classifications whether or not schools are meeting their targets. Mr. Carpenter pointed out that Portsmouth has a 2.9 percent dropout rate, and there are only four schools in the state that have a lower dropout rate than we do.
- c) **Update on FY'09 Budget Request.** Ms. Tague distributed a 1-page explanation of solutions to closing the budget gap, which was presented to the Town Council. It also outlined staffing detail including reductions and reallocations. Ms. Tague stated that before this information was presented to the Town Council, there were \$168,147 worth of cuts yet to be identified. By the time it was presented to the Council, however, the School Department learned from our healthcare cooperative, GHGRI, that there would be an additional distribution after July 1, 2008, of \$86,261. In addition, there was a savings of \$57,000 due to the elimination of an additional teaching position. In the staffing area, Ms. Tague stated that some reductions were made, and we worked very hard on scheduling in order to share some co-curricular staff across the elementary schools and middle school. We made these reductions so that we didn't have to cut student programs. She stated that we were able to cut 8.43 positions instead of 6.73 positions, and we are trying to move, through attrition, the Special Education positions to the Region. There are three positions this year that can be moved: one high

school Special Education position, a speech language pathologist, and an elementary Special Education position that were not filled at the Job Fair.

- d) **Bid Award – Telephone System.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender to award the contract for a districtwide telephone system to Rhode Island Telephone in the amount of \$94,784. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0. Ms. Tague explained the need for the telephone system. She stated that nine bids were received. A thorough evaluation of functionality, efficiency, and network compatibility, was conducted for all bidders; and Rhode Island Telephone was determined to be the vendor who would most suit our needs. Funds for this bid are available in the Building Warrant. The budgeted amount also includes funds for additional telephone related expenses such as deteriorated wiring and additional telephones and software. This is the newest technology at the most reasonable cost. The installation will take place over a 2-year period beginning with Portsmouth High School, followed by Central Administration, Portsmouth Middle School, and the elementary schools.
- e) **Request for Approval – School Meal Price Increase.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Levesque to approve an increase of \$0.25 on all paid reimbursable meals districtwide.” So voted 6-0.

## 7. SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

- a) **Finance.** Mr. Carpender stated that the Public Hearing on the budget will take place tomorrow night at 7:00 PM at the Portsmouth Middle School Little Theatre.
- b) **Policy.** Mrs. Levesque reported that the Policy Subcommittee reviewed the student handbooks and decided to have a 1-page parent acknowledgement of policies, etc. She stated that in response to the Berkshire recommendation, the Policy Subcommittee is working on standardizing the policy on student promotion and retention across our schools, and they are in the process of obtaining copies of this policy from several other school districts.
- c) **GCOC.** Mrs. Cortvriend announced that the groundbreaking for the wind turbine will take place on Friday at 4:00 PM at Portsmouth High School and will be held rain or shine. She also announced that they are ready to sign our contract for the mezzanine. She will contact Mr. Davidson for an update and to schedule the next meeting.
- d) **Facilities.** Mr. Buddemeyer announced that the next Facilities Committee meeting is scheduled for tomorrow at 4:00 PM to discuss the building survey.

Mr. Carpender mentioned the letter from the State Traffic Commission regarding the safety around the high school. He reiterated the letter. They anticipate the work to be completed this summer.

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to adjourn the meeting.  
The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield  
Recording Secretary for

Terri Cortvriend, Clerk